

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USINT CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 094400

FOLL SENT ACTION SECSTATE DIA INFO AMMAN ABU DHABI LONDON
JERUSALEM DHAHRAN JIDDA KUWAIT MOSCOW PARIS TEL AVIV USUN
USCINCEUR FROM BEIRUT 16 MAY 73 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 5660

DEPT PASS USINT CAIRO

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SUBJ: INTERNAL SECURITY - SITREP 19

SITREP 19

1. SITUATION AT 1430 Z QUIET IN BEIRUT AND OUTLYING
AREAS. CURFEW LIFTED TODAY FROM 0600 TO 1900 LOCAL.
AS USUAL, HOWEVER, OCCASIONAL SHOOTINGS AND EXPLOSIONS
WERE REPORTED DURING NIGHT MAY 15-16 BOTH HERE AND IN
TRIPOLI AND SIDON, DESPITE CONTINUANCE OF WIDESPREAD GOL
SECURITY PRECAUTIONS NOTED OUR SITREP 14. SECURITY OFFICIALS
INFORM US THEY NOW DETAINING " SEVERAL HUNDRED" PERSONS
PICKED UP AS RESULT OF TIGHTENED, SECURITY MEASURES SINCE
MAY 2. LATEST EXAMPLE WAS RAID BY INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES
THIS MORNING ON SUSPECTED FATAH WEAPONS CACHE NEAR EMBASSY
WHICH NETTED MODEST QUANTITY OF ROCKETS, GRENADES, SMALL
ARMS AND MUNITIONS. AT SAME TIME, FEDAYEEN CONTINUE
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REINFORCE THEIR FORTIFICATIONS (INCLUDING TRENCHES AND BARRICADES) IN AND AROUND BEIRUT REFUGEE CAMPS, AND THERE ARE SIGNS THEY BEGINNING CIRCULATE OR EVEN TAKE UP POSITIONS FURTHER AFIELD IN CERTAIN OTHER MOSELEM QUARTERS (E. G., SINN EL FIL, MAQASSED, BASTA).

2. ON POLITICAL FRONT, PRES FKANGIE IN HIS CONTINUING CONSULTATIONS WITH VARIOUS LEBANESE POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS STILL ADHERING FIRMLY TO HIS INSISTENCE THAT AGREEMENT PROVIDING FOR RADICAL CHANGES IN FUTURE GOL-FEDAYEEN RELATIONSHIP SHOULD PRECEDE FORMATION OF NEW LEBANESE CABINET, ALTHOUGH EFFORTS BY LOCAL LEFTIST AND SUNNI MOSLEM LEADERS TO REVERSE THIS SEQUENCE CONTINUE. LOCAL NEWS MEDIA, IN MEANTIME, GIVING CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION TO 1969 SARG REGULATION (SIGNED BY THEN MINDEF HAFEZ ASSAD) CONTROLLING FEDAYEEN ACTIVITIES IN SYRIA, TEXT OF WHICH PRES FRANGIE HAS BEEN PASSING OUT TO HIS LEBANESE AND ARAB VISITORS FOR PAST SEVERAL DAYS. BEIRUT PAPERS ALSO WAXING OPTIMISTIC OVER REPORTS THAT NEWLY FORMED MIXED COMMITTEE MENTIONED OUR SITREP 18 HELD PRELIMINARY 3- HOUR MEETING MAY 15 IN WHICH DISCUSSIONS AIMED AT FINDING " NEW FORMULA" FOR FEDAYEEN PRESENCE IN LEBANON WERE SAID TO HAVE FINALLY BEGUN. LEBANESE SIDE WAS REPRESENTED BY ARMY COLS AHMED AL HAJ (COMMANDER NCO ACADEMY) AND DIB KAL (LONG TIME ARMY LIAISON OFFICER TO FEDAYEEN CLAP, OR REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR LEBANON), LT COL SELIM MUGHABGHAB (ARMY' S CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER) AND TWO CIVILIANS (ONE JURIST PLUS HEAD OF FONOFF' S DEPT OF ARAB AFFAIRSL. FEDAYEEN REPS WERE FATAH MILITARY LEADER ABU ZA' IM, PFLP' S SALAH SALAH (FORMER MEMBER PLO EX COMM RECENTLY REPLACED BY AHMED YAMANI), AND PDFLP' S " ABU ADNAN" (WHO HAS LATELY EMERGED AS THAT ORGANIZATION' S PUBLIC SPOKESMAN). REPRESENTATION ON BOTH SIDES SEEMS DECIDEDLY SECOND- ECHELON, IF NOT ACTUALLY SECOND RATE (E. G., MUGHABGHAB AND ABU ADNAN).

3. MOST PAPERS DESCRIBE ATMOSPHERE IN MAY 15 COMMITTEE MEETING AS FRIENDLY, WITH BOTH SIDES EXPRESSING DESIRE REACH AGREEMENT ON ALL POINTS AT ISSUE BETWEEN GOL AND FEDAYEEN. ACCORDING TO INDEPENDENT AN NAHAR, COMMITTEE WILL REVIEW 1969 CAIRO AGREEMENT WITH VIEW TO PRESERVING PROVISIONS " APPLICABLE TO PRESENT SITUATION" AND ATTEMPT CONFIDENTIAL

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RESOLVE OTHER ISSUES ALLEGEDLY PIN- POINTED BY ERSTWHILE PRIMIN HAFEZ IN MEMO SUBMITTED TO FEDAYEEN LEADERSHIP MAY 14. LATTER ISSUES SAID TO INCLUDE (A) TYPES OF WEAPONS ALLOWED INSIDE CAMPS; (B) ELIMINATION OF FEDAYEEN BARRICADES IN AREAS SURROUNDING CAMPS; (C) CONSOLIDATION OF FEDAYEEN INFO ACTIVITIES UNDER SINGLE AUTHORITY; (C) NON- CIRCULATION OF ARMED FEDAYEEN OUTSIDE

CAMP PREMISES; (E) UNIFICATION OF FEDAYEEN GROUPS WITHIN PLO FRAMEWORK; AND (F) CESSATION OF ARRESTS AND DETENTIONS OF CIVILIANS BY FEDAYEEN.

4. FRENCH- LANGUAGE DAILY L' ORIENT LE JOUR REPORTED THAT FEDAYEEN REPS HAVE SO FAR AGREED TO (A) FORBID WEARING OF COMMANDO UNIFORMS IN PUBLIC; (B) CEASE CARRYING WEAPONS OUTSIDE CAMPS; (C) STOP SETTING UP ROADBLOCKS TO VERIFY IDENTITY OF CIVILIANS; AND (D) CEASE ABDUCTIONS, DETENTIONS AND INTERROGATIONS OF CIVILIANS. PAPER ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT FEDAYEEN HAVE NOT YET AGREED TO (A) REMOVE HEAVY WEAPONS FROM CAMPS; (B) TURN OVER PALESTINIANS SOUGHT BY POLICE TO LEBANESE AUTHORITIES; (C) PERMIT ESTABLISHMENT OF LEBANESE POLICE POSTS OUTSIDE CAMP ENTRANCES; OR (D) ALLOW TRANSPORT OF THEIR WEAPONS BE PLACED UNDER ARMY CONTROL. COMMENT: THIS ACCOUNT SOUNDS ABOUT RIGHT IN THAT IT CONFIRMS WITH WHAT WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY LEBANESE ARMY, I. E., THERE WAS MUCH TALK BUT NO AGREEMENT ON FUNDAMENTAL POINTS. IT IS LIKELY THAT AGREEMENT ON FUNDAMENTAL POINTS, IF IT SHOULD COME ABOUT, WILL BE AS RESULT OF " SECRET" CONTACTS AT HIGHER LEVEL (E. G., HAFEZ MISSION) WITH DETAILS TO BE WORKED OUT BY MIXED COMMITTEE.

5. AIRPORT STILL OPEN AND OPERATING NORMALLY. SUBSTANTIAL BLOCKAGE, HOWEVER, REMAINS IN BEIRUT PORT, DESPITE ROUND- THE- CLOCK EFFORTS TO CLEAR GOODS JAMMED IN PORT AND FREE ZONE WAREHOUSES. (SITUATION COMPLICATED BY SYRIAN BORDER CLOSURE, FLIGHT OF SYRIAN PORT WORKERS, AND FACT MANY LOCAL MERCHANTS ARE WITHDRAWING GOODS ONLY IN MINIMUM AMOUNTS (NAMES SHORT- TERM NEEDS). AT LEAST 25 VESSELS ARE WAITING OUTSIDE HARBOR, WHOSE QUAYS ARE JAMMED WITH ABOUT 30 SHIPS.

6. EMBASSY PERSONNEL AND DEPENDENTS STILL SAFE, AS ARE MEMBERS AMERICAN COMMUNITY.
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HOUGHTON UNQUOTE RUSH

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